

REMARKS

The 7 August 2003 official action addressed claims 1-35. Claims 1-7, 12-16 and 21-25 are amended. Claims 30-35 are canceled. Claims 1-29 are pending for reconsideration.

For the examiner's convenience a clean copy of the claims is attached at the end of the reply.

1. Overview of amendmentsClaim amendments

Independent claims 1, 12 and 21 have been significantly rewritten to focus on the creation of a viewer profile that indicates category preferences from among predefined categories arranged in a hierarchy. These claims also recite that a user is enabled to navigate among the categories in accordance with the hierarchy, as described in paragraph 90 of the application.

Claim 2 is rewritten to specify that a keyword tool receives input specifying keywords. Claims 13 and 22 are amended in a consistent manner.

Claim 3 is amended to clarify its language concerning keyword preference scores. Claims 14 and 23 are amended in a consistent manner.

Claim 4 is rewritten to recite that a category tool receives input specifying category preference scores. Claims 16 and 25 are amended in a consistent manner.

Claim 5 is amended to more clearly explain the concept of a qualified keyword, which is described in paragraph 88 of the application. Claims 15 and 24 are amended in a consistent manner.

Claim 6 is rewritten to recite that a qualified keyword tool receives input specifying qualified keyword preference scores.

Claim 7 is rewritten to specify that graphical slide bars are used to input category preference scores.

No new matter is added.

2. Response to objections and rejections

Section 101 rejection

The claims rejected under Section 101 have been canceled.

Prior art rejections

Claims 1, 3, 5-6, 8, 10-17, 19-26 and 28-35 were rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Lee (U.S. 6,483,428) Barrett. Claims 2, 4 and 7 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over Lee in view of Barrett (U.S. 6,005,597). Claims 9, 18 and 27 were indicated to be allowable.

Applicants believe that the amended claims are patentably distinguished from the cited references as explained below.

Summary

The rejections basically cite Lee as teaching viewer profile creation, and cite Barrett as teaching the use of a slide bar as a user interface tool for indicating the degree of user preference.

Applicant agrees that Lee teaches a system that allows a viewer to create a viewer profile indicating the types of programs that the viewer likes. However Applicant believes that the present claims now recite features that are not found in Lee or Barrett.

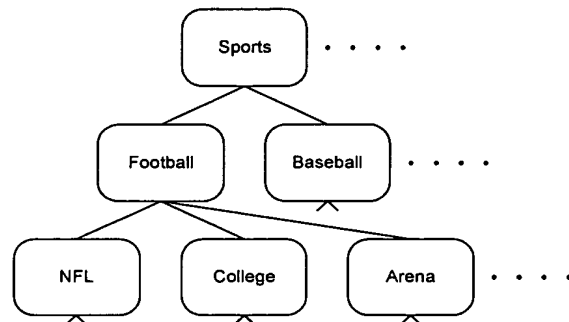
As a general matter, the first three independent claims (1, 12, 21) focus on creating a user profile by navigating predefined categories of a category hierarchy and specifying categories that represent subject matter of interest. Other features recited in dependent claims include keywords, qualified keywords, and scores associated with categories, keywords and qualified keywords.

The following discussion explains the differences between the claims and the cited references. Analogous claims are addressed together.

Claims 1, 12 and 21

These claims involve creating a viewer profile by specifying predefined categories that represent subject matter of interest to the viewer.

In particular, the claims specify that the subject matter represented by each of the predefined categories is defined such that the predefined categories together form a hierarchy comprising at least three levels. The following is an example of such a category hierarchy:



In accordance with claims, a user can specify any of these categories as representing subject matter of interest to the viewer. Further, in accordance with the claims, user input is used to navigate among the hierarchy of categories to allow the user to find the categories to be specified.

The official action notes that Lee discloses viewer profile creation involving the selection of categories. The official action further notes that by assigning scores to each category, a viewer effectively creates a hierarchy of categories in terms of the scores assigned by the viewer to each category.

The claims now clarify that the hierarchical arrangement of categories is not related to scores associated with each category, rather it is the result of the way that the subject matter represented by each category has been defined. In other words, the categories are hierarchical because of the subject matter that they refer to, not because of how they are rated by a user.

This is not taught by Lee. Lee includes subject matter categories as attributes of programs that a viewer can select to indicate preferences (see, e.g., the second “ring” from the left in Figure 4). However the subject matter of these categories is not defined in a hierarchical fashion. Rather it is simply a list

of non-overlapping genre types, such as music, movies, news, etc. They do not have the multi-level subject matter characteristics specified by the claims.

Further, Lee's categories cannot be navigated in accordance with a hierarchy. Lee's categories are simply arranged as a list that wraps around at the end. The user can only navigate these categories in a straight line based on the arbitrary order of their arrangement. There is no multi-level hierarchical structure to their order and thus no navigation of such a structure.

Therefore claims 1, 12 and 21 are distinguished from Lee.

Claims 2, 13 and 22

These claims specify receiving input specifying keywords representing subject matter of interest to the viewer. The official action notes that Lee teaches a viewer profile that includes keywords, however Lee does not provide this feature in conjunction with hierarchical category definitions and navigation as described above.

Claims 3, 14 and 23

These claims specify user input that provides preference scores for keywords. The official action notes that Lee enables a user to associate scores with "beads" which may include keywords, however Lee does not provide this feature in conjunction with hierarchical category definitions and navigation as described above.

Claims 4, 16 and 25

These claims specify user input that provides preference scores for subject matter categories. The official action notes that Lee enables a user to associate scores with "beads" which may include subject matter categories, however Lee does not provide this feature in conjunction with hierarchical category definitions and navigation as described above.

Claims 5, 15 and 24

These claims specify user input that indicates a “qualified keyword.” The claims specify that such a keyword represents subject matter of interest to the viewer only when that subject matter is also represented by a specified one of said predefined categories. Lee does not provide this feature in conjunction with hierarchical category definitions and navigation as described above.

Claim 6

This claim specifies that a user may provide a preference score for a qualified keyword. The official action notes that Lee teaches assigning a value to a “bead,” which may be a category or a keyword. However, the claims involve the assignment of a single preference score to the combination of a category and a keyword. This feature is not taught by Lee, and Lee does not provide this feature in conjunction with hierarchical category definitions and navigation as described above.

Claim 7

This claim specifies that preferences scores for categories, keywords and qualified keywords are indicated using a slide bar. The official action notes that Barrett teaches a slide bar for indicating a preference for a particular program. Claim 7 specifies that the slide bar is used to indicate preferences for a category, keyword or qualified keyword, which means that the preference is indicated without reference to a particular program. Further, Lee does not provide this feature in conjunction with hierarchical category definitions and navigation as described above.

Claims 8, 17 and 26

This claim specifies that priorities are assigned to multiple viewer profiles to give them a relative weighting. The official action notes that Lee teaches assigning scores to profile beads which represent different viewer profiles, however Lee does not provide this feature in conjunction with hierarchical category definitions and navigation as described above.

Claims 9, 18 and 27

The indication of allowability of these claims is appreciated.

Claim 10, 19 and 28

These claims specify that a user inputs an amount of time in advance of a program that he wishes to be alerted of the program. The official action states that this feature is taught by Lee at col. 3, lines 23-63. Applicants have reviewed the cited portion of Lee but are unable to determine where this feature is taught. The cited portion discusses a system that learns a viewer's preferences and alerts the viewer or records programs based on those preferences. However there is nothing that indicates that the user can configure amount of time in advance of a program that the alert for that program is made. Applicants believe that the cited portion of Lee does not support the rejection.

Claims 11, 20 and 29

These claims specify that a viewer profile includes a time of day during which it is active. The official action notes that time period is a search criteria in Lee, however Lee does not provide this feature in conjunction with hierarchical category definitions and navigation as described above.

The foregoing amendments and remarks address all bases for objection and rejection and are believed to place the case in condition for allowance. The examiner is invited to contact the undersigned to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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CLEAN COPY OF THE AMENDED CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A user interface for creating and editing a viewer profile used in a device for determining programming events of interest to a viewer, the user interface comprising:

a category tool for receiving input from a user specifying predefined subject matter categories representing subject matter of interest to the viewer, wherein the subject matter represented by each of said predefined categories is defined such that the predefined categories together form a hierarchy comprising at least a set of top-level categories, respective sets of first level sub-categories each corresponding to and encompassed by a top level category, and respective sets of second level sub-categories each corresponding to and encompassed by a first level sub-category, and

wherein said category tool is responsive to user navigation commands to provide navigation among said predefined categories in accordance with said hierarchy.

2. (Currently Amended) The user interface claimed in claim 1, wherein said user interface further comprises a keyword tool for receiving input from a user specifying keywords representing subject matter of interest to the viewer.

3. (Currently Amended) The user interface claimed in claim 2, wherein said input received by said keyword tool comprises keyword preference scores indicating an amount of viewer interest in subject matter represented by a specified keyword.

4. (Currently Amended) The user interface claimed in claim 1, wherein said input received by said category tool comprises category preference scores indicating an amount of viewer interest in subject matter represented by a specified predefined category.

5. (Currently Amended) The user interface claimed in claim 1, further comprising a qualified keyword tool for receiving input from a user indicating that a keyword specified by the user represents subject matter of interest to the viewer only when that subject matter is also represented by a specified one of said predefined categories.

6. (Currently Amended) The user interface claimed in claim 5, wherein said qualified keyword tool further receives input comprising qualified keyword preference scores indicating an amount of viewer interest in subject matter represented by specified qualified keyword.

7. (Currently Amended) The user interface claimed in claim 4, wherein said user interface is a graphical user interface and said user interface comprises a sliding bar for indicating a category preference score associated with a specified category.

8. (Previously Amended) The user interface claimed in claim 1, further comprising a priority tool for receiving input from a user specifying a priority of said viewer profile relative to other viewer profiles when multiple viewer profiles are used for determining programming events of interest.

9. (Previously Amended) The user interface claimed in claim 1, further comprising an alerts per time period tool for receiving input from a user specifying a maximum number of alerts to be generated within a given time period using said viewer profile.

10. (Previously Amended) The user interface claimed in claim 1, further comprising an alert time advance tool for receiving input from a user specifying, for a programming event determined to be of interest using said viewer profile, an amount of time prior to the programming event that an alert for the programming event is to be provided.

11. (Previously Amended) The user interface claimed in claim 1, further comprising a profile activation time tool for receiving input from a user specifying times of day during which the viewer profile is to be used for identifying programming events of interest.

12. (Currently Amended) A method for creating a viewer profile used for determining programming events of interest to a viewer, comprising:

receiving user input for navigation among predefined subject matter categories, wherein the subject matter represented by each of said predefined categories is defined such that the predefined categories together form a hierarchy comprising at least a set of top-level categories, respective sets of first level sub-categories each corresponding to and encompassed by a top level category, and respective sets of second level sub-categories each corresponding to and encompassed by a first level sub-category, and wherein said navigation is performed in accordance with said hierarchy;

receiving input from the user specifying predefined categories of said hierarchy representing subject matter of interest to the viewer; and

storing data representing said specified predefined categories in a viewer profile in a computer readable medium.

13. (Currently Amended) The method claimed in claim 12, further comprising receiving input from a user specifying a keyword representing subject matter of interest to the viewer.

14. (Currently Amended) The method claimed in claim 13, wherein said input specifying a keyword comprises a keyword preference score indicating an amount of viewer interest in subject matter represented by a specified keyword.

15. (Currently Amended) The method claimed in claim 13, further comprising receiving qualified keyword input from a user indicating that a keyword specified by the user represents subject matter of interest to the

viewer only when that subject matter is also represented by a specified one of said predefined categories.

16. (Currently Amended) The method claimed in claim 12, wherein said input specifying a predefined category comprises a category preference score indicating an amount of viewer interest in subject matter represented by a specified category.

17. (Previously Amended) The method claimed in claim 12, further comprising receiving input from a user specifying a priority of said viewer profile relative to other viewer profiles when multiple viewer profiles are used for determining programming events of interest.

18. (Previously Amended) The method claimed in claim 12, further comprising receiving input from a user specifying a maximum number of alerts to be generated using said viewer profile within a given period of time.

19. (Previously Amended) The method claimed in claim 12, further comprising receiving input from a user specifying, for a programming event determined to be of interest using said viewer profile, an amount of time prior to the programming event that an alert for the programming event is to be provided.

20. (Previously Amended) The method claimed in claim 12, further comprising receiving input from a user specifying times of day during which the viewer profile is to be used for identifying programming events of interest.

21. (Currently Amended) A programmable device for determining programming events of interest to a viewer, the device comprising a computer readable medium storing programming code to control the device to perform processing comprising:

receiving input from the user for navigation among predefined subject matter categories, wherein the subject matter represented by each of said predefined categories is defined such that the predefined categories together form a hierarchy comprising at least a set of top-level categories, respective sets of first level sub-categories each corresponding to and encompassed by a top level category, and respective sets of second level sub-categories each corresponding to and encompassed by a first level sub-category, and wherein said navigation is performed in accordance with said hierarchy;

receiving input from the user specifying predefined categories representing subject matter of interest to the viewer; and

storing data representing said specified predefined categories in a viewer profile.

22. (Currently Amended) The device claimed in claim 21, said processing further comprising receiving input from a user specifying a keyword representing subject matter of interest to the viewer.

23. (Currently Amended) The device claimed in claim 22, wherein said input specifying a keyword comprises a keyword preference score indicating an amount of viewer interest in subject matter represented by a specified keyword.

24. (Currently Amended) The device claimed in claim 22, said processing further comprising receiving qualified keyword input from a user indicating that a keyword specified by the user represents subject matter of interest to the viewer only when that subject matter is also represented by a specified one of said predefined categories.

25. (Currently Amended) The device claimed in claim 21, wherein said input specifying a predefined category comprises a category preference score indicating an amount of viewer interest in subject matter represented by a specified category.

26. (Previously Amended) The device claimed in claim 21, said processing further comprising receiving input from a user specifying a priority of said viewer profile relative to other viewer profiles when multiple viewer profiles are used for determining programming events of interest.

27. (Previously Amended) The device claimed in claim 21, said processing further comprising receiving input from a user specifying a maximum number of alerts to be generated using said viewer profile within a given period of time.

28. (Previously Amended) The device claimed in claim 21, said processing further comprising receiving input from a user specifying, for a programming event determined to be of interest using said viewer profile, an amount of time prior to the programming event that an alert for the programming event is to be provided.

29. (Previously Amended) The device claimed in claim 21, said processing further comprising receiving input from a user specifying times of day during which the viewer profile is to be used for identifying programming events of interest.

Claims 30-35 (Canceled)